

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-35 in the original application.

Please insert the following new claims:

36. (NEW) An apparatus for handling cards comprising:
a card loading area for receiving a group of cards to be arranged within the apparatus into a plurality of randomized sets of cards and delivered to a tray to form sets of cards to be given as a set to a player or dealer;

a shuffling chamber having a plurality of card-receiving compartments, wherein each compartment is able to receive more than one card within an opening of the card-receiving compartment,

a card moving system comprising two sequential single card moving components positioned for moving at least one card at a time from the card loading area into a card-receiving compartment,

the two sequential card single card moving components comprising a first single card moving component that moves at least a single card from the card loading area towards a second card moving component and the second card moving component receiving the individual card from the first card moving component, and

a microprocessor for controlling card movement; wherein the first single card moving component reduces moving forces against the single card when the second card moving component applies moving forces against the single card.

37. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein the card moving mechanism moves only one card at a time into a card-receiving compartment.

38. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein sets of cards are delivered to the tray as a group of cards.

39. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 37 wherein each card-receiving compartment receives cards comprising a set of cards selected from the group consisting of players' hands, dealer's hands, discards, and excess cards.

40. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein a separator is located between each adjacent card-receiving compartment, and there is an edge of the separator that a card moved into card-receiving compartments contacts before that card is fully inserted into a card-receiving compartment.

41. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein the shuffling chamber comprises a configuration selected from the group: a carousel, a vertical mixing stack and a fan shape.

42. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein each card-receiving compartment is of the same size.

43. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein not all of the card-receiving compartments are of the same size.

44. (NEW) A method for delivering hands of randomly mixed cards from an apparatus comprising:

providing at least one deck of playing cards;

forming at least one set of cards within the apparatus from the at least one deck of playing cards;

delivering to a single delivery tray from the at least one set of cards within the apparatus a first individual set of randomly mixed playing cards for use in a game;

delivering to a player or dealer the first individual set of randomly mixed playing cards from the delivery tray of the apparatus, with all cards in the first individual set delivered at the same time, and then providing a second individual set of randomly mixed playing cards into the delivery tray.

45. (NEW) The method of claim 39 wherein individual sets of randomly mixed playing cards are delivered to the delivery tray and there is a single delivery tray in the apparatus which can be accessed so that two edges of cards in the delivery tray can be contacted by a hand of a dealer.

46. (NEW) The method of claim 45 wherein after at least one individual set of randomly mixed playing cards is manually removed from the delivery tray, another individual set of randomly mixed playing cards is delivered from the apparatus to the delivery tray.

47. (NEW) The method of claim 40 wherein the total number of cards in sets of randomly mixed playing cards are hands delivered from the apparatus, and the hands comprise a total number of cards that are less than the total of the at least one deck of cards..

48. (NEW) The method of claim 39 wherein at least one, but less than all individual sets of randomly mixed playing cards are a subset of cards that is delivered to a dealer as a hand.

49. (NEW) The method of claim 38 wherein each set of randomly mixed playing cards delivered from the apparatus to the tray is then delivered to a position on a gaming table that is distinct from a position where another set of randomly mixed playing cards is delivered.

50. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein all sets of randomly mixed playing cards are delivered to a storage area within the apparatus without removal of previous sets of randomly mixed playing cards from the storage area.

51. (NEW) A method in an apparatus for delivering hands of randomly mixed cards comprising:

- providing at least one deck of playing cards in the apparatus;
- forming a first group of randomly mixed playing cards in a single delivery tray, with all cards in the group present in the single delivery tray at the same time;
- removing the group of randomized cards from the single delivery tray;
- forming a second individual group of randomly mixed playing cards within the same single delivery tray after the first group of randomized cards are removed in the play of a single round of cards.

52. (NEW) The method of claim 51 wherein each formed group of cards is a hand of cards.

53. (NEW) The method of claim 51 wherein after at least one individual hand is manually removed from the delivery tray, another individual hand is automatically delivered from the apparatus to the delivery tray.

54. (NEW) The method of claim 53 wherein the total number of cards in hands delivered from the apparatus comprise a total number of cards that is less than the total of the at least one deck of cards.

55. (NEW) The method of claim 51 wherein at least one, but less than all individual hands is a subset of cards that is delivered to a dealer as a hand and each hand delivered from the apparatus to the tray is then delivered to a position on a gaming table that is distinct from a position where another hand is delivered.

REMARKS CONCERNING THE AMENDMENTS

The above amendments have been made in an effort to more clearly define the present invention and to respond to issues in the Office Action. Antecedent basis for the amendments may be found generally in the specification and, for example, as follows:

1) A single delivery tray in the apparatus finds antecedent basis generally in the specification and, for example, in Figure 3; Page 19, lines 17-23 (“a second card receiver 36”); page 20, lines 1-3 (“a deck, card or hand receiving platform 36”); page 35, lines 11-12 (“the card receiving platform”); and page 37, lines 12-26 (describing pushing single hands onto the tray and removing each hand). This identifies the antecedent basis for the amendment to claim 20.

2) The amendment to provide antecedent basis for “the drive roller” was editorial in nature and that term already appeared in the claim.

3) The amendment to claim 1 (and the amendment to claim 3 to be consistent with the change in claim 1) also finds antecedent basis generally in the specification and, for example, on page 37, lines 12-26.

4) New claims 36-44 find antecedent basis in original claims 1-35 and page 19, lines 12-26.

5) New claim 45 finds antecedent basis in original claims 1-25 and Figure 3, elements 36.